

# ***Exhibit B***

# Office of the District Attorney

## County of Lebanon

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PRESS RELEASE

### FATAL SHOOTING

LEBANON, PENNSYLVANIA – Lebanon County District Attorney Pier Hess Graf ruled the fatal shooting by the Pennsylvania State Police of Charity THOME on March 16, 2020, was justified.

THOME fled from the Lebanon City and North Lebanon Police Departments on March 15, 2020, in an unrelated incident. Officers tried to make contact with her; she reversed her vehicle at an extremely high rate of speed. Video showed THOME spin her vehicle around, accelerate, and drive at a high rate of speed in the exact direction of both uniformed officers. THOME thereafter evaded law enforcement.

At approximately 2 am on March 16, 2020, Charity THOME attempted to break into an occupied, private residence. The homeowners relayed their fears of THOME to 911. By the time law enforcement arrived at the location, THOME again fled in a vehicle at a high rate of speed.

THOME thereafter engaged police in lengthy high-speed chase. THOME exhibited no regard for traffic lights, signs, police sirens, other vehicles on the roadway, or the safety of the general public.

By the time THOME drove into Jackson Township, three (3) marked police cruisers pursued her. She increased her speed and refused to desist. THOME rolled down her window and threw items at the police vehicles. State Police decided to disable THOME'S vehicle and engaged in a precision immobilization technique, or a P.I.T. maneuver.

THOME lost control of her vehicle and swerved into a field. THOME accelerated forward and drove into an occupied, marked police cruiser.

When they heard the acceleration of THOME'S vehicle, two (2) Pennsylvania State Police Troopers exited their cruiser and approached the suspect. They heard the acceleration of THOME'S engine, witnessed her actively drive into the marked police cruiser, and saw her tires spin. The distance between the State Police and THOME measured approximately twenty (20) feet.

Interviews of the troopers involved revealed they feared multiple outcomes. The State Police could not see the North Lebanon Township Officer; they did not know if he was inside or outside of his patrol vehicle as THOME accelerated. THOME could continue to ram the Officer's cruiser; she could reverse and run over any officers on scene.

Given the totality of THOME'S violent, reckless, and dangerous actions on the evening in question, the State Police drew their service weapons and fired upon THOME.

The Lebanon County Detective Bureau (LCDB) commenced an investigation at the direction of DA Graf that same morning. During the investigation, the LCDB worked closely with the State Police and other police departments involved.

THOME'S autopsy revealed her toxicology results. At the time of her death, THOME was under the influence of the methamphetamine; her blood also contained amphetamines. The intoxicants in her system are stimulants which typically cause irrational thought and erratic actions.

"Most of us will never know what it feels like as a police officer, faced with an immediate situation that requires action. Law enforcement involved in this case committed the most serious human act – they took a life. However, they did so in the face of an extremely fast-paced, tumultuous, and dangerous situation. They did so believing it necessary to save their fellow officers and themselves. They did so knowing the use of deadly force is necessary in only the gravest of situations. The totality of THOME'S actions, the realities of the situation, and the split seconds which required the troopers to act all prove this shooting was justified," said DA Hess Graf.

Inquiries regarding this Release should be directed to the Office of the District Attorney at (717)-491-3102 or [pgraf@lebcnty.org](mailto:pgraf@lebcnty.org).

